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NEITHER SPIRIT NOR BIRD

Shoshone Love Song

Neither spirit nor bird—
That was my flute you heard
Last night by the river.
When you came with your wicker jar
Where the river drags the willows,
That was my flute you heard,
Wacoba, Wacoba,
Calling, Come to the willows!

Neither the wind nor a bird
Rustled the lupin blooms—
That was my blood you heard
Answer your garment's hem
Whispering through the grasses;
That was my blood you heard
By the wild rose under the willows.

That was no beast that stirred—
That was my heart you heard,
Pacing to and fro
In the ambush of my desire
To the flute's four-noted call.
Wacoba, Wacoba,
That was my heart you heard
Leaping under the willows.